

THE VALLEY OF LILIES

body; even as that father of ours did, who ever ran along this holy way with zeal and not with negligence. And if the devil should come with many illusions and varied fantasies and with servile fear, and wish to occupy our mind and soul, let us not be afraid; for these things are become powerless by the virtue of the Cross. O sweetest Love! They can do no more than God allows them; and God wills nought else than our good ; He will not, therefore, give us more than we can bear. Take comfort, take comfort; and do not shun pain ; but ever keep the will holy, so that it may repose in nought save in what Christ loved and in what God hated.¹ And our will, so armed with hate and love, will receive such fortitude that, as St. Paul says, neither the world nor the devil nor the flesh will be able to draw us back from this way. Let us bear, let us bear, dearest brother ; for the more pain we bear down here with Christ crucified, the more glory shall we receive; and no pain will be so much rewarded, as mental pain and labour of the heart ; for these are the greatest pains of all, and, therefore, are worthy of greater fruit." 2

It is somewhat remarkable that Catherine seems never to have had any dealings with Giovanni Colombini. Although she frequently visited the monastery of Santa Bonda in the company of Lisa, and corresponded with two of the nuns there, she never makes any allusion to Giovanni in her letters. A cousin of his, however, Matteo Colombini, was among her correspondents, and Tommaso di Guelfaccio, whom we have met among the Gesuati, seems to have been one of the first to frequent her cell, and was afterwards, to some extent, associated with her labours.

¹ That is, keep the will steadfast in love of virtue and hatred of vice.

^a Letter 225 (121). This letter was probably in answer to one of Lazzarino's to her, of which a mutilated fragment is preserved in the Bibhoteca Comunale of Siena (MS. T. iii. 3), in which, as far as any connected sense can be made out of what is left, he appears to be complaining of the persecution he is receiving from his fellow Franciscans. It is dated " in Firenze lo dl dela pentecoste," and addressed to " Chaterina da Siena sposa di Jeso Cristo crocifixo et serva de suo servi et madre de suo fedeli devoti, in Pisa." Both letters are probably of the year '375-